

US FOREST SERVICE NORTHWEST MONTANA BACKCOUNTRY AVALANCHE ADVISORY



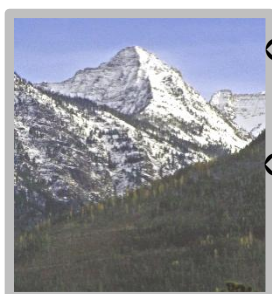
FOR THE GLACIER PARK AND FLATHEAD & KOOTENAI NATIONAL FOREST AREAS

Avalanche advisory does not apply to developed ski areas

Issue Date: 8 AM, Friday, April 06, 2012
Valid Until: Midnight, Friday, April 06, 2012
Next Update: Pending special avalanche advisory
Issued by: Joy Sather

This advisory is a product of the US Forest Service, US Dept. of Agriculture. Along with other snow and avalanche information, it is originally posted at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/flathead>. An audio summary is available via telephone at 406-257-8402

All Mountain Ranges



7,500 ft. elevation



5,000 ft.



Avalanche Danger Summary

2 - Moderate : 5,000 to 7,500 ft. elevation on steep, open terrain

1 - Low : below 5,000

Avalanche Danger Trend: Avalanche danger will trend upward with warming temperatures by Sunday.

AVALANCHE – INSTABILITY DESCRIPTION

All Mountain Ranges - 5,000 to 7,500 ft. elevation

Danger Level	2 - Moderate
Confidence	Fair
Travel Advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heightened avalanche conditions on steep, open slopes and gullies Evaluate snow and terrain carefully
Likelihood of Avalanches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural avalanche unlikely Human triggered avalanches possible
Avalanche Size & Distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small avalanches in specific areas or Larger avalanches in isolated areas

AVALANCHE – INSTABILITY DESCRIPTION

All Mountain Ranges - below 5,000 ft. elevation

Danger Level	1 - LOW
Confidence	Fair
Travel Advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally safe avalanche conditions exist Watch for unstable snow on isolated terrain features
Likelihood of Avalanches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both natural and human triggered avalanche unlikely
Avalanche Size & Distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very small avalanches in widespread areas or Small avalanche in isolated areas

Because of the general nature of this advisory message, each backcountry party will always need to make their own time and site specific avalanche hazard evaluations. This advisory best describes conditions at the time of its issuance. As time passes avalanche and snow conditions may change, sometimes quite rapidly. Elevation and geographic distinctions used are approximate and transition zones between hazards exist.

Recent Mountain Weather

Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The region has been experiencing spring like conditions.
Precipitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No significant gains in snow water equivalent since Sunday.
Temperature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daytime temperatures have been above freezing, with nighttime temps dropping to the high teens to mid- 20's.
Wind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Winds have been calm to light since our last advisory.

Field Observation Locations

Thursday, 4-05-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jewel Basin NE of Bigfork
Observer Report Locations	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received no reports since Tues

Avalanches Observed	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No natural or triggered avalanches observed. Good visibility in the late afternoon.
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Instability Concern / Avalanche Problem	Level of Concern	Most★★★ Less★★ Least ★		
New Storm or Near Surface Snow	★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2-7 inches of new snow accumulations predicted for today through Friday night. This new snow may cause surface sluffs due to the strong underlying melt freeze crust. 		
Wind Loading		Predicted light winds from the NE today. The concern is if winds predicted become stronger transporting new snow on to stiff melt freeze crusts which could create soft slabs.		
Recent or Persistent Buried Weak Layer	★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basal layer facets are still a concern in shallow/thin snow, i.e. around rocky areas 		
Spring Wet Snow or Melt-Freeze	★★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stress test results were Q1 shears with hard to very hard forces mostly on melt freeze interfaces within the snow pack. The warming trend and below freezing night time temps will allow these layers to persist within the snowpack. 		
Rain-on-Snow				
Loose Snow				
Other Concerns		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extra caution is advised on steep open terrain. 		

Weather Forecast

[Current NWS Backcountry Forecast](#)

Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A cold trough with a low pressure system for today, with minor snow amounts predicted.
Precipitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2-7 inches predicted through Saturday morning.

Temperature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temperatures will trend upwards through the weekend and night time temps will be below freezing.
Wind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winds are light out of the N/NE and will change to the S/SW by Saturday.

Avalanche Outlook

Trend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The avalanche danger will trend upward with warming temperatures by Sunday.
Concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid traveling on solar aspects during period of warming temperatures, which could be 40 to 50 degrees F above 6,000 feet by Sunday.
Comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Carry and know how to use avalanche safety equipment</i> • <i>Watch for a possible rapid change in weather conditions beyond forecast amounts</i> • <i>Be alert that if a slope is open enough to ski or highmark currently it is very likely an established avalanche path.</i> • <i>Check out the site specific snow stability before jumping in or on</i>

This concludes our avalanche advisory season unless a special advisory is needed. Be safe out there and have a great up-coming summer. Look forward to another winter next year.

Regards,